



CELEBRATING
OUR CENTENARY



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA

Hall of Fame Inductees

Engineering Heritage Queensland

Sir James Arthur HOLT

1898 - 1974

INDUCTED IN 2006

Sir James Arthur Holt (1899-1982), engineer and public servant, was born on 30 April 1899 at Lithgow, New South Wales. Holt was educated at Lithgow Public and Sydney Boys' High schools before attending the University of Sydney (BE, 1921) where he graduated with first-class honours in civil engineering.

First an engineering draftsman with the New South Wales Department of Public Works employed under John Bradfield on the design and construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Holt was promoted in 1927 to supervising engineer. After the bridge opened to traffic that year, he spent two years as officer-in-charge of the Narooma office of the Department of Main Roads.

From 1934-1940, Holt was the Supervising Engineer for Brisbane's new cross river bridge (called the Story Bridge in 1937), progressing to Engineer-in-Charge of all AWC works in the Cairns region. From 1944, Holt was Chief Engineer with the Bridge Board.

In 1946, Holt was delegated to supervise the construction of the University of Queensland's new campus at St Lucia. Some three years later, he was appointed Chief Engineer of the Coordinator-General's Department, with oversight of both the bridge and hydraulics branches. He superintended the completion of the Somerset dam, and the design and construction of bridges over the Fitzroy, Burdekin and North Johnstone rivers and

of water conservation and hydro-electricity schemes for the Tully, Barron and Burdekin rivers. In 1953, he took responsibility for compiling Queensland's annual coordinated plan of works and in June 1954, succeeded Kemp as Coordinator-General.

As Chairman of the Queensland Traffic Commission (1958-63) and of the Standards Association of Australia's Queensland committee (1950-76), he participated in numerous interdepartmental and advisory committees.

Holt was active in the Institution of Engineers, Australia, serving as a Committee Member of Queensland (1939-48), Chairman (1943, 1947) and Member of Council (1948-54), and was elected an Honorary Fellow in 1971. He was awarded the (W. H.) Warren Memorial Prize (1939), the R.W. Chapman Medal (1953) and the (Sir) Peter Nicol Russell Medal (1961). An external member of the University of Queensland's engineering faculty (1948-56) and member of senate (1955-68), he received an honorary Doctorate of Engineering in 1965.

Additionally, he was a founding member of the St Lucia Bowls Club and a member of the Johnsonian Club. Knighted in 1960, he retired as Coordinator-General in 1968 and took up several directorships: Evans Deakin Ltd (1970-75), Crusader Oil NL (1970-79) and the Metropolitan Permanent Building Society (1972-79).